THE ISLAND RACE

HENRY NEWBOLT

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BY

HENRY NEWBOLT

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Sixth Thousand

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TO

ROBERT BRIDGES

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O STRENGTH DIVINE OF ROMAN DAYS,
O SPIRIT OF THE AGE OF FAITH,
GO WITH OUR SONS ON ALL THEIR WAYS,
WHEN WE LONG SINCE ARE DUST AND WRAITH.

The Vigil

ENGLAND! where the sacred flame
  Burns before the inmost shrine,
Where the lips that love thy name
  Consecrate their hopes and thine,
Where the banners of thy dead
Weave their shadows overhead,
Watch beside thine arms to-night,
Pray that God defend the Right.

Think that when to-morrow comes
War shall claim command of all,
Thou must hear the roll of drums,
Thou must hear the trumpet's call.
Now before they silence ruth,
Commune with the voice of truth ;
England ! on thy knees to-night
Pray that God defend the Right.

Hast thou counted up the cost,
What to foeman, what to friend ?
Glory sought is Honour lost,
How should this be knighthood's end ?
Know'st thou what is Hatred's meed ?
What the surest gain of Greed ?
England ! wilt thou dare to-night
Pray that God defend the Right ?

Single-hearted, unafraid,
Hither all thy heroes came,
On this altar's steps were laid
Gordon's life and Outram's fame.
England! if thy will be yet
By their great example set,
Here beside thine arms to-night
Pray that God defend the Right.

So shalt thou when morning comes
Rise to conquer or to fall,
Joyful hear the rolling drums,
Joyful hear the trumpets call.
Then let Memory tell thy heart;
"*England! what thou wert, thou art!*"
Gird thee with thine ancient might,
Forth! and God defend the Right!

Admiral Death

Boys, are ye calling a toast to-night?
(Hear what the sea-wind saith)
Fill for a bumper strong and bright,
And here's to Admiral Death!
He's sailed in a hundred builds o' boat,
He's fought in a thousand kinds o' coat,
He's the senior flag of all that float,
And his name's Admiral Death.

Which of you looks for a service free?
(Hear what the sea-wind saith)
The rules o' the service are but three
When ye sail with Admiral Death.
Steady your hand in time o' squalls,
Stand to the last by him that falls,
And answer clear to the voice that calls,
"Ay, Ay! Admiral Death!"

How will ye know him among the rest?
(Hear what the sea-wind saith)
By the glint o' the stars that cover his breast
Ye may find Admiral Death.
By the forehead grim with an ancient scar,
By the voice that rolls like thunder far,
By the tenderest eyes of all that are,
Ye may know Admiral Death.

Where are the lads that sailed before?
(Hear what the sea-wind saith)
Their bones are white by many a shore,
They sleep with Admiral Death.
Oh! but they loved him, young and old,
For he left the laggard, and took the bold,
And the fight was fought, and the story's told,
And they sleep with Admiral Death.

The Quarter-Gunner's Yarn

We lay at St. Helen's, and easy she rode
With one anchor catted and freshwater stowed;
When the barge came alongside like bullocks we roared,
For we knew what we carried with Nelson aboard.

Our Captain was Hardy, the pride of us all,
I'll ask for none better when danger shall call;
He was hardy by nature and Hardy by name,
And soon by his conduct to honour he came.

The third day the Lizard was under our lee,
Where the *Ajax* and *Thunderer* joined us at sea,
But what with foul weather and tacking about,
When we sighted the Fleet we were thirteen days out.

The Captains they all came aboard quick enough,
But the news that they brought was as heavy as duff;
So backward an enemy never was seen,
They were harder to come at than Cheeks the Marine.

The lubbers had hare's lugs where seamen have ears,
So we stowed all saluting and smothered our cheers,
And to humour their stomachs and tempt them to dine,
In the offing we showed them but six of the line.

One morning the topmen reported below
The old *Agamemnon* escaped from the foe.
Says Nelson: "My lads, there'll be honour for some,
For we're sure of a battle now Berry has come."

"Up hammocks!" at last cried the bo'sun at dawn;
The guns were cast loose and the tompions drawn;
The gunner was bustling the shot racks to fill,
And "All hands to quarters!" was piped with a will.

We now saw the enemy bearing ahead,
And to East of them Cape Traflagar it was said;
'Tis a name we remember from father to son,
That the days of old England may never be done.

The *Victory* led, to her flag it was due,
Tho' the *Téméraires* thought themselves Admirals too;
But Lord Nelson he hailed them with masterful grace:
"Cap'n Harvey, I'll thank you to keep in your place."

To begin with we closed the *Bucentaure* alone,
An eighty-gun ship and their Admiral's own;
We raked her but once, and the rest of the day
Like a hospital hulk on the water she lay.

To our battering next the *Redoutable* struck,
But her sharpshooters gave us the worst of the luck
Lord Nelson was wounded, most cruel to tell.
"They've done for me, Hardy!" he cried as he fell.

To the cockpit in silence they carried him past,
And sad were the looks that were after him cast;
His face with a kerchief he tried to conceal,
But we knew him too well from the truck to the keel.

When the Captain reported a victory won,
"Thank God!" he kept saying, "my duty I've done."
At last came the moment to kiss him good-bye,
And the Captain for once had the salt in his eye.

"Now anchor, dear Hardy," the Admiral cried;
But before we could make it he fainted and died.
All night in the trough of the sea we were tossed,
And for want of ground tackle good prizes were lost.

Then we hauled down the flag, at the fore it was red,
And blue at the mizzen was hoisted instead
By Nelson's famed Captain, the pride of each tar,
Who fought in the *Victory* off Cape Traflagar.

For a Trafalgar Cenotaph

Lover of England, stand awhile and gaze
With thankful heart, and lips refrained from praise;
They rest beyond the speech of human pride
Who served with Nelson and with Nelson died.

Craven

(Mobile Bay, 1864)

Over the turret, shut in his ironclad tower,
Craven was conning his ship through smoke and flame;
Gun to gun he had battered the fort for an hour,
Now was the time for a charge to end the game.

There lay the narrowing channel, smooth and grim,
A hundred deaths beneath it, and never a sign;
There lay the enemy's ships, and sink or swim
The flag was flying, and he was head of the line.

The fleet behind was jamming ; the monitor hung
Beating the stream ; the roar for a moment hushed ;
Craven spoke to the pilot ; slow she swung ;
Again he spoke, and right for the foe she rushed.

Into the narrowing channel, between the shore
And the sunk torpedoes lying in treacherous rank ;
She turned but a yard too short ; a muffled roar,
A mountainous wave, and she rolled, righted, and sank.

Over the manhole, up in the ironclad tower,
Pilot and Captain met as they turned to fly :
The hundredth part of a moment seemed an hour,
For one could pass to be saved, and one must die.

They stood like men in a dream : Craven spoke,
Spoke as he lived and fought, with a Captain's pride,
" After you, Pilot : " the pilot woke,
Down the ladder he went, and Craven died.

All men praise the deed and the manner, but we—
We set it apart from the pride that stoops to the proud,
The strength that is supple to serve the strong and free,
The grace of the empty hands and promises loud:

Sidney thirsting a humbler need to slake,
Nelson waiting his turn for the surgeon's hand,
Lucas crushed with chains for a comrade's sake,
Outram coveting right before command,

These were paladins, these were Craven's peers,
These with him shall be crowned in story and song,
Crowned with the glitter of steel and the glimmer of tears,
Princes of courtesy, merciful, proud and strong.

Messmates

He gave us all a good-bye cheerily
  At the first dawn of day;
We dropped him down the side full drearily
  When the light died away.
It's a dead dark watch that he's a-keeping there,
And a long, long night that lags a-creeping there,
Where the Trades and the tides roll over him
  And the great ships go by.

He's there alone with green seas rocking him
For a thousand miles round;
He's there alone with dumb things mocking him,
And we're homeward bound.
It's a long, lone watch that he's a-keeping there,
And a dead cold night that lags a-creeping there,
While the months and the years roll over him
And the great ships go by.

I wonder if the tramps come near enough
As they thrash to and fro,
And the battleships' bells ring clear enough
To be heard down below;
If through all the lone watch that he's a-keeping there,
And the long, cold night that lags a-creeping there,
The voices of the sailor-men shall comfort him
When the great ships go by.

The Death of Admiral Blake

(August 7th, 1657)

Laden with spoil of the South, fulfilled with the glory of achievement,

And freshly crowned with never-dying fame,

Sweeping by shores where the names are the names of the victories of England,

Across the Bay the squadron homeward came.

Proudly they came, but their pride was the pomp of a funeral at midnight,

When dreader yet the lonely morrow looms;

Few are the words that are spoken, and faces are gaunt beneath the torchlight

That does but darken more the nodding plumes.

Low on the field of his fame, past hope lay the Admiral triumphant,

And fain to rest him after all his pain ;

Yet for the love that he bore to his own land, ever unforgotten,

He prayed to see the Western hills again.

Fainter than stars in a sky long gray with the coming of the daybreak,

Or sounds of night that fade when night is done,

So in the death-dawn faded the splendour and loud renown of warfare,

And life of all its longings kept but one.

"Oh! to be there for an hour when the shade draws in beside the hedgerows,

And falling apples wake the drowsy noon :

Oh! for the hour when the elms grow sombre and human in the twilight,

And gardens dream beneath the rising moon.

"Only to look once more on the land of the memories
of childhood,

Forgetting weary winds and barren foam:

Only to bid farewell to the combe and the orchard and
the moorland,

And sleep at last among the fields of home!"

So he was silently praying, till now, when his strength
was ebbing faster,

The Lizard lay before them faintly blue;

Now on the gleaming horizon the white cliffs laughed
along the coast-line,

And now the forelands took the shapes they knew,

There lay the Sound and the Island with green leaves
down beside the water,

The town, the Hoe, the masts with sunset fired—

Dreams! ay, dreams of the dead! for the great heart
faltered on the threshold,

And darkness took the land his soul desired.

Væ Victis

Beside the placid sea that mirrored her
With the old glory of dawn that cannot die,
The sleeping city began to moan and stir,
As one that fain from an ill dream would fly;
Yet more she feared the daylight bringing nigh
Such dreams as know not sunrise, soon or late,—
Visions of honour lost and power gone by,
Of loyal valour betrayed by factious hate,
And craven sloth that shrank from the labour of forging fate.

They knew and knew not, this bewildered crowd
That up her streets in silence hurrying passed,
What manner of death should make their anguish loud,
What corpse across the funeral pyre be cast,
For none had spoken it; only, gathering fast
As darkness gathers at noon in the sun's eclipse,
A shadow of doom enfolded them, vague and vast,
And a cry was heard, unfathered of earthly lips,
"What of the ships, O Carthage? Carthage, what of the ships?"

They reached the wall, and nowise strange it seemed
To find the gates unguarded and open wide;
They climbed the shoulder, and meet enough they deemed
The black that shrouded the seaward rampart's side
And veiled in drooping gloom the turrets' pride;
But this was nought, for suddenly down the slope
They saw the harbour, and sense within them died;
Keel nor mast was there, rudder nor rope;
It lay like a sea-hawk's eyry spoiled of life and hope.

Beyond, where dawn was a glittering carpet, rolled
From sky to shore on level and endless seas,
Hardly their eyes discerned in a dazzle of gold
That here in fifties, yonder in twos and threes,
The ships they sought, like a swarm of drowning bees
By a wanton gust on the pool of a mill-dam hurled,
Floated forsaken of life-giving tide and breeze,
Their oars broken, their sails for ever furled,
For ever deserted the bulwarks that guarded the wealth of the world.

A moment yet, with breathing quickly drawn
And hands agrip, the Carthaginian folk
Stared in the bright untroubled face of dawn,
And strove with vehement heaped denial to choke
Their sure surmise of fate's impending stroke;
Vainly—for even now beneath their gaze
A thousand delicate spires of distant smoke
Reddened the disc of the sun with a stealthy haze,
And the smouldering grief of a nation burst with the kindling blaze.

"O dying Carthage!" so their passion raved,
"Would nought but these the conqueror's hate assuage?
If these be taken, how may the land be saved
Whose meat and drink was empire, age by age?"
And bitter memory cursed with idle rage
The greed that coveted gold above renown,
The feeble hearts that feared their heritage,
The hands that cast the sea-kings' sceptre down
And left to alien brows their famed ancestral crown.

The endless noon, the endless evening through,
All other needs forgetting, great or small,
They drank despair with thirst whose torment grew
As the hours died beneath that stifling pall.
At last they saw the fires to blackness fall
One after one, and slowly turned them home,
A little longer yet their own to call
A city enslaved, and wear the bonds of Rome,
With weary hearts foreboding all the woe to come.

Minora Sidera

(The Dictionary of National Biography)

Sitting at times over a hearth that burns
With dull domestic glow,
My thought, leaving the book, gratefully turns
To you who planned it so.

Not of the great only you deigned to tell—
The stars by which we steer—
But lights out of the night that flashed, and fell
To-night again, are here.

Such as were those, dogs of an elder day,
Who sacked the golden ports,
And those later who dared grapple their prey
Beneath the harbour forts:

Some with flag at the fore, sweeping the world
To find an equal fight,
And some who joined war to their trade, and hurled
Ships of the line in flight.

Whether their fame centuries long should ring
They cared not over-much,
But cared greatly to serve God and the king,
And keep the Nelson touch;

And fought to build Britain above the tide
Of wars and windy fate;
And passed content, leaving to us the pride
Of lives obscurely great.

Laudabunt Alii

(After Horace)

Let others praise, as fancy wills,
  Berlin beneath her trees,
Or Rome upon her seven hills,
  Or Venice by her seas;
Stamboul by double tides embraced,
Or green Damascus in the waste.

For me there's nought I would not leave
For the good Devon land,
Whose orchards down the echoing cleeve
Bedewed with spray-drift stand,
And hardly bear the red fruit up
That shall be next year's cider-cup.

You too, my friend, may wisely mark
How clear skies follow rain,
And lingering in your own green park
Or drilled on Laffan's Plain,
Forget not with the festal bowl
To soothe at times your weary soul.

When Drake must bid to Plymouth Hoe
Good-bye for many a day,
And some were sad that feared to go,
And some that dared not stay,

Be sure he bade them broach the best,
And raised his tankard with the rest.

" Drake's luck to all that sail with Drake
For promised lands of gold !
Brave lads, whatever storms may break,
We've weathered worse of old !
To-night the loving-cup we'll drain,
To-morrow for the Spanish Main ! "

San Stefano

A Ballad of the Bold "Menelaus."

It was morning at St. Helen's, in the great and gallant days,
And the sea beneath the sun glittered wide,
When the frigate set her courses, all a-shimmer in the haze,
And she hauled her cable home and took the tide.
She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,
Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;
And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,
When the bold *Menelaus* put to sea.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,

Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;

And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,

When the bold Menelaus *put to sea.*

She was clear of Monte Cristo, she was heading for the land,

When she spied a pennant red and white and blue;

They were foemen, and they knew it, and they'd half a league in hand,

But she flung aloft her royals and she flew.

She was nearer, nearer, nearer, they were caught beyond a doubt,

But they slipped her, into Orbetello Bay,

And the lubbers gave a shout as they paid their cables out,

With the guns grinning round them where they lay.

Now Sir Peter was a captain of a famous fighting race,

Son and grandson of an admiral was he;

And he looked upon the batteries, he looked upon the chase,

And he heard the shout that echoed out to sea.

And he called across the decks, "Ay! the cheering might be late

If they kept it till the *Menelaus* runs;

Bid the master and his mate heave the lead and lay her straight

For the prize lying yonder by the guns."

When the summer moon was setting, into Orbetello Bay

Came the *Menelaus* gliding like a ghost;

And her boats were manned in silence, and in silence pulled away,

And in silence every gunner took his post.

With a volley from her broadside the citadel she woke,

And they hammered back like heroes all the night;

But before the morning broke she had vanished through the smoke

With her prize upon her quarter grappled tight.

It was evening at St. Helen's, in the great and gallant time,

And the sky behind the down was flushing far;

And the flags were all a-flutter, and the bells were all a-chime,

When the frigate cast her anchor off the bar.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,

Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;

And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,

When the bold *Menelaus* came from sea.

She'd a right fighting company, three hundred men and more,

Nine and forty guns in tackle running free;

And they cheered her from the shore for her colours at the fore,

When the bold Menelaus *came from sea.*

Hawke

In seventeen hundred and fifty-nine,
When Hawke came swooping from the West,
The French King's Admiral with twenty of the line,
Was sailing forth, to sack us, out of Brest.
The ports of France were crowded, the quays of France
a-hum
With thirty thousand soldiers marching to the drum,
For bragging time was over and fighting time was come
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

'Twas long past noon of a wild November day
When Hawke came swooping from the West;
He heard the breakers thundering in Quiberon Bay,
But he flew the flag for battle, line abreast.
Down upon the quicksands roaring out of sight
Fiercely beat the storm-wind, darkly fell the night,
But they took the foe for pilot and the cannon's glare for light
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

The Frenchmen turned like a covey down the wind
When Hawke came swooping from the West;
One he sank with all hands, one he caught and pinned,
And the shallows and the storm took the rest.
The guns that should have conquered us they rusted on the shore,
The men that would have mastered us they drummed and marched no more,
For England was England, and a mighty brood she bore
When Hawke came swooping from the West.

The Fighting Téméraire

It was eight bells ringing,
For the morning watch was done,
And the gunner's lads were singing,
As they polished every gun.
It was eight bells ringing,
And the gunner's lads were singing,
For the ship she rode a-swinging,
As they polished every gun.

Oh ! to see the linstock lighting,
Téméraire ! Téméraire !
Oh ! to hear the round shot biting,
Téméraire ! Téméraire !
Oh ! to see the linstock lighting,
And to hear the round shot biting,
For we're all in love with fighting
On the Fighting Téméraire.

It was noontide ringing,
And the battle just begun,
When the ship her way was winging,
As they loaded every gun.
It was noontide ringing,
When the ship her way was winging,
And the gunner's lads were singing
As they loaded every gun.

There'll be many grim and gory,
Téméraire ! Téméraire !
There'll be few to tell the story,
Téméraire ! Téméraire !
There'll be many grim and gory,
There'll be few to tell the story,
But we'll all be one in glory
With the Fighting Téméraire.

There's a far bell ringing
At the setting of the sun,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of the great days done.
There's a far bell ringing,
And a phantom voice is singing
Of renown for ever clinging
To the great days done.

Now the sunset breezes shiver,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
And she's fading down the river,
Téméraire! Téméraire!
Now the sunset breezes shiver,
And she's fading down the river,
But in England's song for ever
She's the Fighting Téméraire.

Drake's Drum

Drake he's in his hammock an' a thousand mile away
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below ?),
Slung atween the round shot in Nombre Dios Bay,
An dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Yarnder lumes the Island, yarnder lie the ships,
Wi' sailor lads a dancin' heel-an'-toe,
An' the shore-lights flashin', an' the night-tide dashin',
He sees et arl so plainly as he saw et long ago.

Drake he was a Devon man, an' rüled the Devon seas
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),
Rovin' tho' his death fell, he went wi' heart at ease,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe,
"Take my drum to England, hang et by the shore,
Strike et when your powder's runnin' low;
If the Dons sight Devon, I'll quit the port o' Heaven,
An' drum them up the channel as we drummed them long ago."

Drake he's in his hammock till the great Armadas come
(Capten, art tha sleepin' there below?),
Slung atween the round shot, listenin' for the drum,
An' dreamin' arl the time o' Plymouth Hoe.
Call him on the deep sea, call him up the Sound,
Call him when ye sail to meet the foe;
Where the old trade's plyin' an' the old flag flyin'
They shall find him ware an' wakin', as they found him long ago!

Admirals All

Effingham, Grenville, Raleigh, Drake,
Here's to the bold and free!
Benbow, Collingwood, Byron, Blake,
Hail to the Kings of the Sea!
Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!
And honour, as long as waves shall break,
To Nelson's peerless name!

Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!
And honour, as long as waves shall break,
To Nelson's peerless name!

Essex was fretting in Cadiz Bay
With the galleons fair in sight;
Howard at last must give him his way,
And the word was passed to fight.
Never was schoolboy gayer than he,
Since holidays first began:
He tossed his bonnet to wind and sea,
And under the guns he ran.

Drake nor devil nor Spaniard feared,
Their cities he put to the sack;
He singed his Catholic Majesty's beard,
And harried his ships to wrack.
He was playing at Plymouth a rubber of bowls
When the great Armada came;
But he said, "They must wait their turn, good souls,"
And he stooped, and finished the game.

Fifteen sail were the Dutchmen bold,
Duncan he had but two:
But he anchored them fast where the Texel shoaled
And his colours aloft he flew.
"I've taken the depth to a fathom," he cried,
"And I'll sink with a right good will,
For I know when we're all of us under the tide,
My flag will be fluttering still."

Splinters were flying above, below,
When Nelson sailed the Sound:
"Mark you, I wouldn't be elsewhere now,"
Said he, "for a thousand pound!"
The Admiral's signal bade him fly,
But he wickedly wagged his head,
He clapped the glass to his sightless eye
And "I'm damned if I see it," he said.

Admirals all, they said their say
(The echoes are ringing still),
Admirals all, they went their way
To the haven under the hill.
But they left us a kingdom none can take,
The realm of the circling sea,
To be ruled by the rightful sons of Blake
And the Rodneys yet to be.

Admirals all, for England's sake,
Honour be yours and fame!
And honour as long as waves shall break
To Nelson's peerless name!

The Old Superb

The wind was rising easterly, the morning sky was blue,
The Straits before us opened wide and free;
We looked towards the Admiral, where high the Peter flew,
And all our hearts were dancing like the sea.

"The French are gone to Martinique with four-and-twenty sail!
The Old *Superb* is old and foul and slow,
But the French are gone to Martinique, and Nelson's on the trail,
And where he goes the Old *Superb* must go!"

So Westward ho! for Trinidad and Eastward ho! for Spain,

And "Ship ahoy!" a hundred times a day;

Round the world if need be, and round the world again,

With a lame duck lagging all the way!

The Old *Superb* was barnacled and green as grass below,

Her sticks were only fit for stirring grog;

The pride of all her midshipmen was silent long ago,

And long ago they ceased to heave the log.

Four year out from home she was, and ne'er a week in port,

And nothing save the guns aboard her bright;

But Captain Keats he knew the game, and swore to share the sport,

For he never yet came in too late to fight.

So Westward ho! for Trinidad and Eastward ho! for Spain,

And "Ship ahoy!" a hundred times a day;

Round the world if need be, and round the world again,

With a lame duck lagging all the way!

"Now up, my lads!" the Captain cried, "for sure the case were hard

If longest out were first to fall behind.

Aloft, aloft with studding sails, and lash them on the yard,

For night and day the Trades are driving blind!"

So all day long and all day long behind the fleet we crept,

And how we fretted none but Nelson guessed;

But every night the Old *Superb* she sailed when others slept,

Till we ran the French to earth with all the rest!

Oh, 'twas Westward ho! for Trinidad and Eastward ho! for Spain,

And, "Ship ahoy!" a hundred times a day;

Round the world if need be, and round the world again,

With a lame duck lagging all the way!

Homeward Bound

After long labouring in the windy ways,
On smooth and shining tides
Swiftly the great ship glides,
Her storms forgot, her weary watches past;
Northward she glides, and through the enchanted haze
Faint on the verge her far hope dawns at last.

The phantom sky-line of a shadowy down,
Whose pale white cliffs below
Through sunny mist aglow,
Like noon-day ghosts of summer moonshine gleam—
Soft as old sorrow, bright as old renown,
There lies the home of all our mortal dream.

Gillespie

Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie left the town behind;
Before he turned by the Westward road
A horseman crossed him, staggering blind.

"The Devil's abroad in false Vellore,
The Devil that stabs by night," he said,
"Women and children, rank and file,
Dying and dead, dying and dead."

Without a word, without a groan,
Sudden and swift Gillespie turned,
The blood roared in his ears like fire,
Like fire the road beneath him burned.

He thundered back to Arcot gate,
He thundered up through Arcot town,
Before he thought a second thought
In the barrack yard he lighted down.

"Trumpeter, sound for the Light Dragoons,
Sound to saddle and spur," he said;
"He that is ready may ride with me,
And he that can may ride ahead."

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
Behind him went the troopers grim,
They rode as ride the Light Dragoons,
But never a man could ride with him.

Their rowels ripped their horses' sides,
  Their hearts were red with a deeper goad,
But ever alone before them all
  Gillespie rode, Gillespie rode.

Alone he came to false Vellore,
  The walls were lined, the gates were barred;
Alone he walked where the bullets bit,
  And called above to the Sergeant's Guard.

"Sergeant, Sergeant, over the gate,
  Where are your officers all?" he said;
Heavily came the Sergeant's voice,
  "There are two living and forty dead."

"A rope, a rope," Gillespie cried:
  They bound their belts to serve his need;
There was not a rebel behind the wall
  But laid his barrel and drew his bead.

There was not a rebel among them all
But pulled his trigger and cursed his aim,
For lightly swung and rightly swung
Over the gate Gillespie came.

He dressed the line, he led the charge,
They swept the wall like a stream in spate,
And roaring over the roar they heard
The galloper guns that burst the gate.

Fierce and fain, fierce and fain,
The troopers rode the reeking flight:
The very stones remember still
The end of them that stab by night.

They've kept the tale a hundred years,
They'll keep the tale a hundred more:
Riding at dawn, riding alone,
Gillespie came to false Vellore.

Seringapatam

"The sleep that Tippoo Sahib sleeps
Heeds not the cry of man;
The faith that Tippoo Sahib keeps
No judge on earth may scan;
He is the lord of whom ye hold
Spirit and sense and limb,
Fetter and chain are all ye gain
Who dared to plead with him."

Baird was bonny and Baird was young,
His heart was strong as steel,
But life and death in the balance hung,
For his wounds were ill to heal.
"Of fifty chains the Sultan gave
We have filled but forty-nine:
We dare not fail of the perfect tale
For all Golconda's mine."

That was the hour when Lucas first
Leapt to his long renown;
Like summer rains his anger burst,
And swept their scruples down.
"Tell ye the lord to whom ye crouch,
His fetters bite their fill:
To save your oath I'll wear them both,
And step the lighter still."

The seasons came, the seasons passed,
They watched their fellows die;
But still their thought was forward cast,
Their courage still was high.
Through tortured days and fevered nights
Their limbs alone were weak,
And year by year they kept their cheer,
And spoke as freemen speak.

But once a year, on the fourth of June,
Their speech to silence died,
And the silence beat to a soundless tune
And sang with a wordless pride;
Till when the Indian stars were bright,
And bells at home would ring,
To the fetters' clank they rose and drank
"England! God save the King!"

The years came, and the years went,
The wheel full-circle rolled;
The tyrant's neck must yet be bent,
The price of blood be told:
The city yet must hear the roar
Of Baird's avenging guns,
And see him stand with lifted hand
By Tippoo Sahib's sons.

The lads were bonny, the lads were young,
But he claimed a pitiless debt;
Life and death in the balance hung,
They watched it swing and set.
They saw him search with sombre eyes,
They knew the place he sought;
They saw him feel for the hilted steel,
They bowed before his thought.

But he—he saw the prison there
In the old quivering heat,
Where merry hearts had met despair
And died without defeat;
Where feeble hands had raised the cup
For feebler lips to drain,
And one had worn with smiling scorn
His double load of pain.

"The sleep that Tippoo Sahib sleeps
Hears not the voice of man;
The faith that Tippoo Sahib keeps
No earthly judge may scan;
For all the wrong your father wrought
Your father's sons are free;
Where Lucas lay no tongue shall say
That Mercy bound not me."

A Ballad of John Nicholson

It fell in the year of Mutiny,
At darkest of the night,
John Nicholson by Jalándhar came,
On his way to Delhi fight.

And as he by Jalándhar came
He thought what he must do,
And he sent to the Rajah fair greeting,
To try if he were true.

"God grant your Highness length of days,
And friends when need shall be;
And I pray you send your Captains hither,
That they may speak with me."

On the morrow through Jalándhar town
The Captains rode in state;
They came to the house of John Nicholson
And stood before the gate.

The chief of them was Mehtab Singh,
He was both proud and sly;
His turban gleamed with rubies red,
He held his chin full high.

He marked his fellows how they put
Their shoes from off their feet;
"Now wherefore make ye such ado
These fallen lords to greet?

"They have ruled us for a hundred years,
In truth I know not how,
But though they be fain of mastery,
They dare not claim it now."

Right haughtily before them all
The durbar hall he trod,
With rubies red his turban gleamed,
His feet with pride were shod.

They had not been an hour together,
A scanty hour or so,
When Mehtab Singh rose in his place
And turned about to go.

Then swiftly came John Nicholson
Between the door and him,
With anger smouldering in his eyes
That made the rubies dim.

"You are overhasty, Mehtab Singh,"—
Oh, but his voice was low!
He held his wrath with a curb of iron,
That furrowed cheek and brow.

"You are overhasty, Mehtab Singh,
When that the rest are gone,
I have a word that may not wait
To speak with you alone."

The Captains passed in silence forth
And stood the door behind;
To go before the game was played
Be sure they had no mind.

But there within John Nicholson
Turned him on Mehtab Singh,
"So long as the soul is in my body
You shall not do this thing.

"Have ye served us for a hundred years
And yet ye know not why?
We brook no doubt of our mastery,
We rule until we die.

"Were I the one last Englishman
Drawing the breath of life,
And you the master-rebel of all
That stir this land to strife—

"Were I," he said, "but a Corporal,
And you a Rajput King,
So long as the soul was in my body
You should not do this thing.

"Take off, take off those shoes of pride,
Carry them whence they came;
Your Captains saw your insolence
And they shall see your shame."

When Mehtab Singh came to the door
His shoes they burned his hand,
For there in long and silent lines
He saw the Captains stand.

When Mehtab Singh rode from the gate
His chin was on his breast:
The Captains said, "When the strong command
Obedience is best."

The Guides at Cabul, 1879

Sons of the Island Race, wherever ye dwell,
Who speak of your fathers' battles with lips that burn,
The deed of an alien legion hear me tell,
And think not shame from the hearts ye tamed to learn,
When succour shall fail and the tide for a season turn
To fight with a joyful courage, a passionate pride,
To die at the last as the Guides at Cabul died.

For a handful of seventy men in a barrack of mud,

Foodless, waterless, dwindling one by one,

Answered a thousand yelling for English blood

With stormy volleys that swept them gunner from gun,

And charge on charge in the glare of the Afghan sun,

Till the walls were shattered wherein they crouched at bay,

And dead or dying half of the seventy lay.

Twice they had taken the cannon that wrecked their hold,

Twice toiled in vain to drag it back,

Thrice they toiled, and alone, wary and bold,

Whirling a hurricane sword to scatter the rack,

Hamilton, last of the English, covered their track.

" Never give in ! " he cried, and he heard them shout,

And grappled with death as a man that knows not doubt.

And the Guides looked down from their smouldering
barrack again,
And behold, a banner of truce, and a voice that spoke:
"Come, for we know that the English all are slain,
We keep no feud with men of a kindred folk;
Rejoice with us to be free of the conqueror's yoke."
Silence fell for a moment, then was heard
A sound of laughter and scorn, and an answering word.

"Is it we or the lords we serve who have earned this
wrong,
That ye call us to flinch from the battle they bade us
fight?
We that live—do ye doubt that our hands are strong?
They that have fallen—ye know that their blood was
bright!
Think ye the Guides will barter for lust of the light
The pride of an ancient people in warfare bred,
Honour of comrades living, and faith to the dead?"

Then the joy that spurs the warrior's heart
To the last thundering gallop and sheer leap
Came on the men of the Guides: they flung apart
The doors not all their valour could longer keep;
They dressed their slender line; they breathed deep,
And with never a foot lagging or head bent,
To the clash and clamour and dust of death they went.

The Gay Gordons

(Dargai, October 20th, 1897)

Who's for the Gathering, who's for the Fair?
(*Gay goes the Gordon to a fight*)
The bravest of the brave are at deadlock there,
(*Highlanders! march! by the right!*)
There are bullets by the hundred buzzing in the air,
There are bonny lads lying on the hillside bare;
But the Gordons know what the Gordons dare
When they hear the pipers playing!

The happiest English heart to-day
(*Gay goes the Gordon to a fight*)
Is the heart of the Colonel, hide it as he may
(*Steady there ! steady on the right !*)
He sees his work and he sees the way,
He knows his time and the word to say,
And he's thinking of the tune that the Gordons play
When he sets the pipers playing !

Rising, roaring, rushing like the tide,
(*Gay goes the Gordon to a fight*)
They're up through the fire-zone, not to be denied ;
(*Bayonets ! and charge ! by the right !*)
Thirty bullets straight where the rest went wide,
And thirty lads are lying on the bare hillside ;
But they passed in the hour of the Gordons' pride,
To the skirl of the pipers' playing.

He Fell Among Thieves

"Ye have robbed," said he, "ye have slaughtered and made an end,
Take your ill-got plunder, and bury the dead:
What will ye more of your guest and sometime friend?"
"Blood for our blood," they said.

He laughed: "If one may settle the score for five,
I am ready; but let the reckoning stand till day:
I have loved the sunlight as dearly as any alive.
"You shall die at dawn," said they.

He flung his empty revolver down the slope,
He climbed alone to the Eastward edge of the trees;
All night long in a dream untroubled of hope
He brooded, clasping his knees.

He did not hear the monotonous roar that fills
The ravine where the Yassin river sullenly flows;
He did not see the starlight on the Laspur hills,
Or the far Afghan snows.

He saw the April noon on his books aglow,
The wisteria trailing in at the window wide;
He heard his father's voice from the terrace below
Calling him down to ride.

He saw the gray little church across the park,
The mounds that hide the loved and honoured dead;
The Norman arch, the chancel softly dark,
The brasses black and red.

He saw the School Close, sunny and green,
The runner beside him, the stand by the parapet wall,
The distant tape, and the crowd roaring between,
His own name over all.

He saw the dark wainscot and timbered roof,
The long tables, and the faces merry and keen;
The College Eight and their trainer dining aloof,
The Dons on the daïs serene.

He watched the liner's stem ploughing the foam,
He felt her trembling speed and the thrash of her screw;
He heard her passengers' voices talking of home,
He saw the flag she flew.

And now it was dawn. He rose strong on his feet,
And strode to his ruined camp below the wood;
He drank the breath of the morning cool and sweet;
His murderers round him stood.

Light on the Laspur hills was broadening fast,
The blood-red snow-peaks chilled to a dazzling white:
He turned, and saw the golden circle at last,
Cut by the Eastern height.

"O glorious Life, Who dwellest in earth and sun,
I have lived, I praise and adore Thee."
A sword swept.
Over the pass the voices one by one
Faded, and the hill slept.

Ionicus

With failing feet and shoulders bowed
Beneath the weight of happier days,
He lagged among the heedless crowd,
Or crept along suburban ways.
But still through all his heart was young,
His mood a joy that nought could mar,
A courage, a pride, a rapture, sprung
Of the strength and splendour of England's war.

From ill-requited toil he turned
To ride with Picton and with Pack,
Among his grammars inly burned
To storm the Afghan mountain-track.
When midnight chimed, before Quebec
He watched with Wolfe till the morning star;
At noon he saw from *Victory's* deck
The sweep and splendour of England's war.

Beyond the book his teaching sped,
He left on whom he taught the trace
Of kinship with the deathless dead,
And faith in all the Island Race.
He passed: his life a tangle seemed,
His age from fame and power was far;
But his heart was high to the end, and dreamed
Of the sound and splendour of England's war.

The Non-Combatant

Among a race high-handed, strong of heart,
Sea-rovers, conquerors, builders in the waste,
He had his birth ; a nature too complete,
Eager and doubtful, no man's soldier sworn
And no man's chosen captain ; born to fail,
A name without an echo : yet he too
Within the cloister of his narrow days
Fulfilled the ancestral rites, and kept alive

The eternal fire; it may be, not in vain;
For out of those who dropped a downward glance
Upon the weakling huddled at his prayers,
Perchance some looked beyond him, and then first
Beheld the glory, and what shrine it filled,
And to what Spirit sacred: or perchance
Some heard him chanting, though but to himself,
The old heroic names: and went their way:
And hummed his music on the march to death.

Clifton Chapel

THIS is the Chapel: here, my son,
Your father thought the thoughts of youth,
And heard the words that one by one
The touch of Life has turned to truth.
Here in a day that is not far,
You too may speak with noble ghosts
Of manhood and the vows of war
You made before the Lord of Hosts.

To set the Cause above renown,
To love the game beyond the prize,
To honour, while you strike him down,
The foe that comes with fearless eyes;
To count the life of battle good,
And dear the land that gave you birth,
And dearer yet the brotherhood
That binds the brave of all the earth—

My son, the oath is yours: the end
Is His, Who built the world of strife,
Who gave His children Pain for friend,
And Death for surest hope of life.
To-day and here the fight's begun,
Of the great fellowship you're free;
Henceforth the School and you are one,
And what You are, the race shall be.

God send you fortune: yet be sure,
Among the lights that gleam and pass,
You'll live to follow none more pure
Than that which glows on yonder brass.
"*Qui procul hinc*," the legend's writ,—
The frontier-grave is far away—
'*Qui ante diem periit:*
Sed miles, sed pro patriâ."

England

Praise thou with praise unending,
The Master of the Wine;
To all their portions sending
Himself he mingled thine:

The sea-born flush of morning,
The sea-born hush of night,
The East wind comfort scorning,
And the North wind driving right:

The world for gain and giving,
The game for man and boy,
The life that joys in living,
The faith that lives in joy.

The Echo

Of a Ballad sung by H. Plunket Greene to his old School

Twice three hundred boys were we,
Long ago, long ago,
Where the Downs look out to the Severn Sea.
Clifton for aye!
We held by the game and hailed the team,
For many could play where few could dream.
Bonny St. Johnston stands on Tay.

Some were for profit and some for pride,
Long ago, long ago,
Some for the flag they lived and died.
Clifton for aye!

The work of the world must still be done,
And minds are many though truth be one.
Bonny St. Johnston stands on Tay.

But a lad there was to his fellows sang,
Long ago, long ago,
And soon the world to his music rang.
Clifton for aye!
Follow your Captains, crown your Kings,
But what will ye give to the lad that sings?
Bonny St. Johnston stands on Tay.

For the voice ye hear is the voice of home,
Long ago, long ago,
And the voice of Youth with the world to roam.
Clifton for aye!
The voice of passion and human tears,
And the voice of the vision that lights the years.
Bonny St. Johnston stands on Tay.

Vitaï Lampada

THERE's a breathless hush in the Close to-night—
  Ten to make and the match to win—
A bumping pitch and a blinding light,
  An hour to play and the last man in.
And it's not for the sake of a ribboned coat,
  Or the selfish hope of a season's fame,
But his Captain's hand on his shoulder smote—
  "Play up! play up! and play the game!"

The sand of the desert is sodden red,—
Red with the wreck of a square that broke;—
The Gatling's jammed and the Colonel dead,
And the regiment blind with dust and smoke.
The river of death has brimmed his banks,
And England's far, and Honour a name,
But the voice of a schoolboy rallies the ranks:
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"

This is the word that year by year,
While in her place the School is set,
Every one of her sons must hear,
And none that hears it dare forget.
This they all with a joyful mind
Bear through life like a torch in flame,
And falling fling to the host behind—
"Play up! play up! and play the game!"

April on Wagon Hill

Lad, and can you rest now,
There beneath your hill!
Your hands are on your breast now,
But is your heart so still?
'Twas the right death to die, lad,
A gift without regret,
But unless truth's a lie, lad,
You dream of Devon yet.

Ay, ay, the year's awaking,
The fire's among the ling,
The beechen hedge is breaking,
The curlew's on the wing ;
Primroses are out, lad,
On the high banks of Lee,
And the sun stirs the trout, lad,
From Brendon to the sea.

I know what's in your heart, lad,—
The mare he used to hunt—
And her blue market-cart, lad,
With posies tied in front—
We miss them from the moor road,
They're getting old to roam,
The road they're on's a sure road
And nearer, lad, to home.

Your name, the name they cherish?
'Twill fade, lad, 'tis true:
But stone and all may perish
With little loss to you.
While fame's fame you're Devon, lad,
The Glory of the West;
Till the roll's called in heaven, lad,
You may well take your rest.

A Song of Exmoor

The Forest above and the Combe below,
On a bright September morn!
He's the soul of a clod who thanks not God
That ever his body was born!
So hurry along, the stag's afoot,
The Master's up and away!
Halloo! Halloo! we'll follow it through
From Bratton to Porlock Bay!

So hurry along, the stag's afoot,
The Master's up and away!
Halloo! Halloo! we'll follow it through
From Bratton to Porlock Bay!

Hark to the tufters' challenge true,
'Tis a note that the red-deer knows!
His courage awakes, his covert he breaks,
And up for the moor he goes!
He's all his rights and seven on top,
His eye's the eye of a king,
And he'll beggar the pride of some that ride
Before he leaves the ling!

Here comes Antony bringing the pack,
Steady! he's laying them on!
By the sound of their chime you may tell that it's time
To harden your heart and be gone.
Nightacott, Narracott, Hunnacott's passed,
Right for the North they race:
He's leading them straight for Blackmoor Gate,
And he's setting a pounding pace!

We're running him now on a breast-high scent,
But he leaves us standing still;
When we swing round by Westland Pound
He's far up Challacombe Hill.
The pack are a string of struggling ants,
The quarry's a dancing midge,
They're trying their reins on the edge of the Chains
While he's on Cheriton Ridge.

He's gone by Kittuck and Lucott Moor,
He's gone by Woodcock's Ley;
By the little white town he's turned him down,
And he's soiling in open sea.
So hurry along, we'll both be in,
The crowd are a parish away!
We're a field of two, and we've followed it through
From Bratton to Porlock Bay!

So hurry along, we'll both be in,
The crowd are a parish away!
We're a field of two, and we've followed it through
From Bratton to Porlock Bay!

Fidele's Grassy Tomb

The Squire sat propped in a pillowed chair,
His eyes were alive and clear of care,
But well he knew that the hour was come
To bid good-bye to his ancient home.

He looked on garden, wood, and hill,
He looked on the lake, sunny and still!
The last of earth that his eyes could see
Was the island church of Orchardleigh.

The last that his heart could understand
Was the touch of the tongue that licked his hand:
"Bury the dog at my feet," he said,
And his voice dropped, and the Squire was dead.

Now the dog was a hound of the Danish breed,
Staunch to love and strong at need:
He had dragged his master safe to shore
When the tide was ebbing at Elsinore.

From that day forth, as reason would,
He was named "Fidele," and made it good:
When the last of the mourners left the door
Fidele was dead on the chantry floor.

They buried him there at his master's feet,
And all that heard of it deemed it meet:
The story went the round for years,
Till it came at last to the Bishop's ears.

Bishop of Bath and Wells was he,
Lord of the lords of Orchardleigh ;
And he wrote to the Parson the strongest screed
That Bishop may write or Parson read.

The sum of it was that a soulless hound
Was known to be buried in hallowed ground :
From scandal sore the Church to save
They must take the dog from his master's grave.

The heir was far in a foreign land,
The Parson was wax to my Lord's command :
He sent for the Sexton and bade him make
A lonely grave by the shore of the lake.

The Sexton sat by the water's brink
Where he used to sit when he used to think :
He reasoned slow, but he reasoned it out,
And his argument left him free from doubt.

"A Bishop," he said, "is the top of his trade:
But there's others can give him a start with the spade:
Yon dog, he carried the Squire ashore,
And a Christian couldn't ha' done no more."

The grave was dug; the mason came
And carved on stone Fidele's name:
But the dog that the Sexton laid inside
Was a dog that never had lived or died.

So the Parson was praised, and the scandal stayed,
Till, a long time after, the church decayed,
And, laying the floor anew, they found
In the tomb of the Squire the bones of a hound.

As for the Bishop of Bath and Wells
No more of him the story tells;
Doubtless he lived as a Prelate and Prince,
And died and was buried a century since.

And whether his view was right or wrong
Has little to do with this my song;
Something we owe him, you must allow;
And perhaps he has changed his mind by now.

The Squire in the family chantry sleeps,
The marble still his memory keeps;
Remember, when the name you spell,
There rest Fidele's bones as well.

For the Sexton's grave you need not search,
'Tis a nameless mound by the island church:
An ignorant fellow, of humble lot—
But he knew one thing that a Bishop did not.

Gavotte

(Old French)

Memories long in music sleeping,
No more sleeping,
No more dumb:
Delicate phantoms softly creeping
Softly back from the old-world come.

Faintest odours around them straying,
Suddenly straying
In chambers dim;
Whispering silks in order swaying,
Glimmering gems on shoulders slim:

Courage advancing strong and tender,
Grace untender
Fanning desire;
Suppliant conquest, proud surrender,
Courtesy cold of hearts on fire—

Willowy billowy now they're bending,
Low they're bending
Down-dropt eyes;
Stately measure and stately ending,
Music sobbing, and a dream that dies.

Imogen

(A Lady of Tender Age)

Ladies, where were your bright eyes glancing,
Where were they glancing yesternight?
Saw ye Imogen dancing, dancing,
Imogen dancing all in white?
Laughed she not with a pure delight,
Laughed she not with a joy serene,
Stepped she not with a grace entrancing,
Slenderly girt in silken sheen?

All through the night from dusk to daytime
Under her feet the hours were swift,
Under her feet the hours of playtime
Rose and fell with a rhythmic lift:
Music set her adrift, adrift,
Music eddying towards the day
Swept her along as brooks in Maytime
Carry the freshly falling May.

Ladies, life is a changing measure,
Youth is a lilt that endeth soon;
Pluck ye never so fast at pleasure,
Twilight follows the longest noon.
Nay, but here is a lasting boon,
Life for hearts that are old and chill,
Youth undying for hearts that treasure
Imogen dancing, dancing still.

Nel Mezzo del Cammìn

Whisper it not that late in years
Sorrow shall fade and the world be brighter,
Life be freed of tremor and tears,
Heads be wiser and hearts be lighter.
Ah! but the dream that all endears,
The dream we sell for your pottage of truth—
Give us again the passion of youth,
Sorrow shall fade and the world be brighter.

The Invasion

Spring, they say, with his greenery
Northward marches at last,
Mustering thorn and elm;
Breezes rumour him conquering,
Tell how Victory sits
High on his glancing helm.

Smit with sting of his archery,
Hardest ashes and oaks
Burn at the root below:
Primrose, violet, daffodil,
Start like blood where the shafts
Light from his golden bow.

Here where winter oppresses us
Still we listen and doubt,
Dreading a hope betrayed:
Sore we long to be greeting him,
Still we linger and doubt
"What if his march be stayed?"

Folk in thrall to the enemy,
Vanquished, tilling a soil
Hateful and hostile grown:

Always wearily, warily,
Feeding deep in the heart
Passion they dare not own—

So we wait the deliverer;
Surely soon shall he come,
Soon shall his hour be due;
Spring shall come with his greenery,
Life be lovely again,
Earth be the home we knew.

Pereunt et Imputantur

(After Martial)

Bernard, if to you and me
Fortune all at once should give
Years to spend secure and free,
With the choice of how to live,
Tell me, what should we proclaim
Life deserving of the name?

Winning some one else's case?
Saving some one else's seat?
Hearing with a solemn face
People of importance bleat?
No, I think we should not still
Waste our time at others' will.

Summer noons beneath the limes,
Summer rides at evening cool,
Winter's tales and home-made rhymes,
Figures on the frozen pool—
These would we for labours take,
And of these our business make.

Ah! but neither you nor I
Dare in earnest venture so;
Still we let the good days die
And to swell the reckoning go.
What are those that know the way,
Yet to walk therein delay?

Felix Antonius

(After Martial)

To-day, my friend is seventy-five;
He tells his tale with no regret;
His brave old eyes are steadfast yet,
His heart the lightest heart alive.

He sees behind him green and wide
The pathway of his pilgrim years;
He sees the shore, and dreadless hears
The whisper of the creeping tide.

For out of all his days, not one
  Has passed and left its unlaid ghost
  To seek a light for ever lost,
Or wail a deed for ever done.

So for reward of life-long truth
  He lives again, as good men can,
  Redoubling his allotted span
With memories of a stainless youth.

The Last Word

Before the April night was late
A rider came to the castle gate ;
A rider breathing human breath,
But the words he spoke were the words of Death.

" Greet you well from the King our lord,
He marches hot for the eastward ford ;
Living or dying, all or one,
Ye must keep the ford till the race be run."

Sir Alain rose with lips that smiled,
He kissed his wife, he kissed his child:
Before the April night was late
Sir Alain rode from the castle gate.

He called his men-at-arms by name,
But one there was uncalled that came:
He bade his troop behind him ride,
But there was one that rode beside.

"Why will you spur so fast to die?
Be wiser ere the night go by.
A message late is a message lost;
For all your haste the foe had crossed.

"Are men such small unmeaning things
To strew the board of smiling Kings?
With life and death they play their game,
And life or death, the end's the same."

Softly the April air above
Rustled the woodland homes of love :
Softly the April air below
Carried the dream of buds that blow.

" Is he that bears a warrior's fame
To shun the pointless stroke of shame ?
Will he that propped a trembling throne
Not stand for right when right's his own ?

" Your oath on the four gospels sworn ?
What oath can bind resolves unborn ?
You lose that far eternal life ?
Is it yours to lose ? Is it child and wife ?"

But now beyond the pathway's bend,
Sir Alain saw the forest end,
And winding wide beneath the hill,
The glassy river lone and still.

And now he saw with lifted eyes
The East like a great chancel rise,
And deep through all his senses drawn,
Received the sacred wine of dawn.

He set his face to the stream below,
He drew his axe from the saddle bow :
" Farewell, Messire, the night is sped ;
There lies the ford, when all is said."

Ireland, Ireland

Down thy valleys, Ireland, Ireland,
Down thy valleys green and sad,
Still thy spirit wanders wailing,
Wanders wailing, wanders mad.

Long ago that anguish took thee,
Ireland, Ireland, green and fair,
Spoilers strong in darkness took thee,
Broke thy heart and left thee there.

Down thy valleys, Ireland, Ireland,
Still thy spirit wanders mad;
All too late they love that wronged thee,
Ireland, Ireland, green and sad.

Moonset

Past seven o'clock: time to be gone;
Twelfth-night's over and dawn shivering up:
A hasty cut of the loaf, a steaming cup,
Down to the door, and there is Coachman John.

Ruddy of cheek is John and bright of eye;
But John it appears has none of your grins and winks;
Civil enough, but short: perhaps he thinks:
Words come once in a mile, and always dry.

Has he a mind or not? I wonder; but soon
We turn through a leafless wood, and there to the right,
Like a sun bewitched in alien realms of night,
Mellow and yellow and rounded hangs the moon.

Strangely near she seems, and terribly great:
The world is dead: why are we travelling still?
Nightmare silence grips my struggling will;
We are driving for ever and ever to find a gate.

"When you come to consider the moon," says John at last,
And stops, to feel his footing and take his stand;
"And then there's some will say there's never a hand
That made the world!"
A flick, and the gates are passed.

Out of the dim magical moonlit park,
Out to the workday road and wider skies:
There's a warm flush in the East where day's to rise,
And I'm feeling the better for Coachman John's remark.

Hymn

In the Time of War and Tumults

O Lord Almighty, Thou whose hands
  Despair and victory give ;
In whom, though tyrants tread their lands,
  The souls of nations live ;

Thou wilt not turn Thy face away
  From those who work Thy will,
But send Thy peace on hearts that pray,
  And guard Thy people still.

Remember not the days of shame,
  The hands with rapine dyed,
The wavering will, the baser aim,
  The brute material pride :

Remember, Lord, the years of faith,
The spirits humbly brave,
The strength that died defying death,
The love that loved the slave:

The race that strove to rule Thine earth
With equal laws unbought:
Who bore for Truth the pangs of birth,
And brake the bonds of Thought.

Remember how, since time began,
Thy dark eternal mind
Through lives of men that fear not man
Is light for all mankind.

Thou wilt not turn Thy face away
From those who work Thy will,
But send Thy strength on hearts that pray
For strength to serve Thee still.

The Building of the Temple

(An Anthem heard in Canterbury Cathedral)

The Organ.

O Lord our God, we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers: our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding.

O Lord God of our fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of Thy people, and prepare their heart unto Thee.

And give unto Solomon my son a perfect heart to keep Thy commandments, and to build the palace for the which I have made provision.

Boys' voices.

O come to the Palace of Life,

Let us build it again.

It was founded on terror and strife,
It was laid in the curse of the womb,
And pillared on toil and pain,
And hung with veils of doom,
And vaulted with the darkness of the tomb.

Men's voices.

O Lord our God, we are sojourners here for a day,
Strangers and sojourners, as all our fathers were:
Our years on the earth are a shadow that fadeth away;
Grant us light for our labour, and a time for prayer.

Boys.

But now with endless song,
And joy fulfilling the Law;
Of passion as pure as strong
And pleasure undimmed of awe;
With garners of wine and grain
Laid up for the ages long,

Let us build the Palace again
And enter with endless song,
Enter and dwell secure, forgetting the years of wrong.

Men.

O Lord our God, we are strangers and sojourners here,
Our beginning was night, and our end is hid in Thee:
Our labour on the earth is hope redeeming fear,
In sorrow we build for the days we shall not see.

Boys.

Great is the name
Of the strong and skilled,
Lasting the fame
Of them that build:
The tongues of many nations
Shall speak of our praise,
And far generations
Be glad for our days.

Men.

We are sojourners here as all our fathers were,
As all our children shall be, forgetting and forgot:
The fame of man is a murmur that passeth on the air,
We perish indeed if Thou remember not.

We are sojourners here as all our fathers were,
Strangers travelling down to the land of death:
There is neither work nor device nor knowledge there,
O grant us might for our labour, and to rest in faith.

Boys.

In joy, in the joy of the light to be,

Men.

O Father of Lights, unvarying and true,

Boys.

Let us build the Palace of Life anew.

Men.

Let us build for the years we shall not see.

Boys.

Lofty of line and glorious of hue,

With gold and pearl and with the cedar tree,

Men.

With silence due

And with service free,

Boys.

Let us build it for ever in splendour new.

Men.

Let us build in hope and in sorrow, and rest in Thee.

Notes

The Quarter-Gunner's Yarn. This ballad is founded on fragmentary lines communicated to the author by Admiral Sir Windham Hornby, K.C.B., who served under Sir Thomas Hardy in 1827.

Væ Victis. See *Livy*, xxx., 43, *Diodorus Siculus*, xix., 106.

San Stefano. Sir Peter Parker was the son of Admiral Christopher Parker, grandson of Admiral Sir Peter Parker (the life-long friend and chief mourner of Nelson), and great-grandson of Admiral Sir William Parker. On his mother's side he was grandson of Admiral Byron, and first cousin of Lord Byron, the poet. He was killed in action near Baltimore in 1814, and buried in St. Margaret's, Westminster, where may be seen the monument erected to his memory by the officers of the *Menelaus*.

The Fighting Téméraire. The two last stanzas have been misunderstood. It seems, therefore, necessary to state that they are intended to refer to Turner's picture in the National Gallery of "The Fighting *Téméraire* Tugged to her Last Berth."

Drake's Drum. A state drum, painted with the arms of Sir Francis Drake, is preserved among other relics at Buckland Abbey, the seat of the Drake family in Devon.

Seringapatam. In 1780, while attempting to relieve Arcot, a British force of three thousand men was cut to pieces by Hyder Ali. Baird, then a young captain in the 73rd, was left for dead on the field. He was afterwards, with forty-nine other officers, kept in prison at Seringapatam, and treated with Oriental barbarity and treachery by Hyder Ali and his son Tippoo Sahib, Sultans of Mysore. Twenty-three of the prisoners died by poison, torture, and fever; the rest were surrendered in 1784. In 1799, at the siege of Seringapatam, Major-General Baird commanded the first European brigade, and volunteered to lead the storming column. Tippoo Sahib, with eight thousand of his men, fell in the assault, but the victor spared the lives of his sons and forbade a general sack of the city.

Clifton Chapel. Clifton is one of the schools from which the largest number of boys pass direct into the R.M.A., Woolwich, and R.M.C., Sandhurst. Thirty-five Old Cliftonian officers served in the campaign of 1897 on the Indian Frontier, of whom twenty-two were mentioned in despatches and six recommended for the Distinguished Service Order. Of the three hundred Cliftonians who served in the war in South Africa, thirty were killed in action and fourteen died of wounds or fever.

> Clifton, remember these thy sons who fell
> Fighting far over sea;
> For they in a dark hour remembered well
> Their warfare learned of thee.

The Echo. The ballad was "The Twa Sisters of Binnorie," as set by Arthur Somervell.

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